



Office of Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice Advisory Council Membership Solicitation: 2022

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is the role of the Environmental Justice Advisory Council?

The Environmental Justice Advisory Council (Council or EJAC) was continued by Governor Philip D. Murphy per Executive Order No. 23 (E.O. 23) on April 20, 2018, with the role of advising the Commissioner on issues involving environmental justice and public health in New Jersey, as well as coordinating with the Department of Environmental Protection (Department) and the Department's Office of Environmental Justice in providing advice and guidance to Executive branch departments and agencies for the consideration of Environmental Justice in implementing their statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

2. What positions are vacant?

The Department is seeking applications from interested individuals to fill six (6) vacancies for 3-year terms through 2025. Vacancies are anticipated to be filled by April 2022.

- Local grassroots or community groups (1 vacancy)
- State or federally recognized tribal governments or indigenous groups (1 vacancy)
- State-wide social justice/civil rights organizations or labor (1 vacancy)
- Public health (1 vacancy)
- Business or industry (2 vacancies)

Applicants will be considered based on the current vacancies and according to the Administrative Order No. 2020-02, which states that the "Commissioner will strive to reflect the regional, racial, gender, religious, and ethnic diversity of the State of New Jersey" and that, "in an effort to achieve diversity of professional and organizational affiliation within the membership, no two members shall participate on behalf of the same group, organization, county or municipal government, business, or academic institution. Please be aware that the Department's policy is that, unless otherwise prescribed by statute, members will be appointed to three-year terms.

3. What issues will the EJAC be working on during the next term?

The objectives for meetings and actions during the next EJAC term include broad discussions and the development of practical solutions for evolving environmental justice issues, including but not limited to air quality concerns; lead (in drinking water, dust/paint, and contaminated soil); water quality (including PFAS levels); combined sewer overflows (CSOs); brownfield redevelopment and urban green spaces; environmental enforcement initiatives; climate resiliency and mitigation

initiatives; opportunities to participate in the transition to a renewable energy future for NJ; and enhancing education, outreach, and engagement for meaningful involvement from environmental justice communities.

4. Who can apply to serve on the EJAC?

All interested individuals are eligible to apply to serve on the EJAC except for State Government Employees – the EJAC bylaws stipulate that EJAC members are non-state employees.

5. How often does the EJAC meet? What is the time commitment for members? What activities are required of members?

The EJAC conducts its business through a combination of face-to-face meetings and video conference calls. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the EJAC used to meet face-to-face six times annually at Department headquarters in Trenton, NJ, supplemented by monthly (or less frequent as needed) working group conference calls. Since the beginning of the pandemic, all meetings have been conducted virtually through Microsoft Teams video calls. The option to meet virtually is likely to be available even if there is a return to in-person meetings. The average workload for the members is approximately 6 -8 hours per month, which represents a rough estimate of the time members spend in conference calls, reviewing relevant documents, or meeting face-to-face. Between full council meetings, members participate on a working group that meets monthly via conference call. Throughout the year, members circulate material for members to review.

6. May I send an alternate or proxy representative if I am unable to participate in a meeting?

Alternates or proxies CAN NOT participate on behalf of members because individual members are appointed to serve by the Commissioner.

7. Is travel involved? If so, how frequent, for how long, and to where? Who pays for travel?

Members serve on the Council in a voluntary capacity. Travel is not required other than for attendance at the face-to-face meetings at the Department in Trenton, NJ when face-to-face meetings are scheduled; however, members may want to conduct community visits or attend events associated with working group priorities. The Department does not reimburse travel expenses.

8. How are members appointed to EJAC?

The Commissioner of the Department shall make all appointments to EJAC and members serve their terms at the Commissioner's discretion.

9. How is diverse representation sought in the appointment of EJAC members?

In the composition of the EJAC, the Department's Commissioner shall strive to reflect the racial, religious, gender, ethnic and regional diversity of New Jersey and include a wide range of stakeholders from various sectors with different points of view. To achieve a diverse professional

and organizational representation, there shall be no more than one member per professional or organizational affiliation.

10. How do I apply for membership to EJAC?

Individuals interested in being considered for membership must complete the membership application and submit it along with resume/curriculum vitae (CV), outside employment questionnaire, and one letter of recommendation (not required if applicant is currently serving on the EJAC), by the application deadline.

11. Is it appropriate for State employees to provide a letter of recommendation?

State employees, except for the Department's Commissioner's office, may recommend individuals for membership on EJAC. Such letters can be drafted in their capacity as a private citizen or in their capacity as a state employee if they have the authority to represent their agency in such matters.

12. If appointed, how long do you serve?

Members shall serve a term of three years. Individuals may serve more than one term.

13. Are current EJAC members automatically reappointed?

Existing members are not automatically reappointed at the end of their term. If they would like to serve additional term(s), they must complete the application for the Commissioner's consideration.

14. Can I be disqualified due to a Conflict of Interest?

You must be free of Conflict of Interest to serve on the EJAC. A [State of New Jersey Outside Employment Questionnaire](#) is required and if your outside employment activity impairs your ability to be fair and exercise your role on the EJAC independently as determined by the ELO you may not qualify for appointment.